

# IGNITE DURHAM LEARNING FOUNDATION



## IMPACT REPORT

SEPTEMBER 1, 2022 TO AUGUST 31, 2023

## MISSION AND VISION

The **Ignite Durham Learning Foundation** is a charitable organization that serves to remove financial barriers to create equitable opportunities that empower Durham District School Board students to achieve academic & personal success.

*Tomorrow* made  
**BRIGHTER!**

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD NEIL JOSHI

As Chair of the Board for the Ignite Durham Learning Foundation (IDLF) for the past four years it has been an absolute joy to watch the foundation grow and mature into what it is today. A well-functioning Board that is constantly evolving to meet the needs of students attending schools in the Durham District School Board (DDSB), across the Region of Durham. Since March of 2019 I have had the honour and pleasure of working with a strong and passionate Board of Directors, and outstanding Executive Director and Fundraising Coordinator, dedicated to serving the IDLF and its student beneficiaries.

We are incredibly grateful for all the donors and community members both corporate and individual that have made donations to the IDLF over the last year. In addition, we thank the many amazing educators in the DDSB as our eyes and ears in our schools, matching resources located at the IDLF Depot or applying for funding to support children and youth during their time of need.

I get such a thrill to visit IDLF's Depot located in the Village Union Public School in Oshawa. The newly renovated space holds everything from food including non-perishable and now fresh food, school supplies, coats and backpacks, and many other items that the IDLF will provide to deserving children, youth and families of the DDSB.

We continue to work hard to achieve our mission of removing financial barriers to create equitable opportunities for students of the DDSB; however, we cannot do it without the generosity and kindness of our amazing community members! Over the last year costs have risen due to macro-economic factors, greatly impacting families in our Region. Families are struggling more than ever to make ends meet, deciding whether to pay a bill or buy groceries, in many cases forgoing a meal to keep the heating on.

As I think about the current economic reality and the many students that may not be receiving the necessities to be the best they can be in our schools, I ask myself the question... why not? I truly believe there is plenty to go around in the great Region of Durham and through this report you will read about the success we have had to generate an equitable experience for many students.

There is still more work to do. There are many amazing charities and foundations out there, so thank you! If you are reading this, it means you have an interest in bettering our communities and the impact you are making is outstanding.

To our community members that are hearing about us for the first time please reach out to me directly, any Board member or our staff team, to learn more about what we do and how you can help make a difference! We look forward to continuing to work with you to make our communities stronger... together!

**Neil Joshi**  
**Chair of the Board**



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Neil Joshi



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**ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**  
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**FUNDRAISING DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR**  
Emily Collins

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Our work would not be possible without the generous support of our donors and corporate partners. Thank you so much to the following individuals and businesses for making tomorrow brighter for DDSB students in need.

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- Telus Friendly Future Foundation

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# THANK YOU!

# IN-KIND DONATIONS

Thanks to so many individual corporate donors this year we received

# \$395,809.53



COBS BREAD

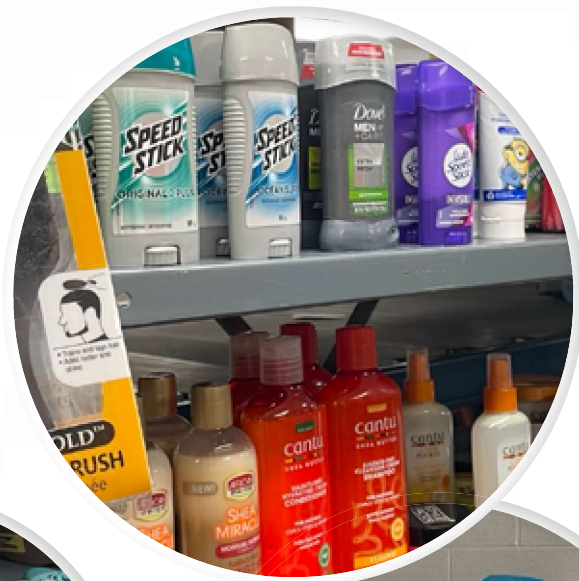


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BRANDS FOR CANADA



THERMOS



# \$141,018.45

## TOTAL DOLLARS RAISED



**596** students supported



**328**

**Starfish**  
requests fulfilled



**109** Make a Difference requests fulfilled



**85**  
**SCHOOLS**

across the Durham District School Board supported



**10** Think Outside the Bell requests fulfilled

**1** Future Fund requests fulfilled

**263** Clothing requests fulfilled

**148** S.N.A.C.K. requests fulfilled



**57 Grad fees**  
**19 Grad Trips**  
requests fulfilled

**3** Health & Medical requests fulfilled

**39** Leadership Camp requests fulfilled

**5** Field Trip requests fulfilled

**1** Summer Camp requests fulfilled

**14** School based extra curricular requests fulfilled

**2** Glasses requests fulfilled

**9** After School Recreation Program requests fulfilled

**48** Transportation requests fulfilled

# OUR FUNDING PILLARS

The Pillars of Ignite Durham Learning Foundation exist to guide the work of the foundation as well as direct resources towards students who need them efficiently, carrying out our goal of successful and thriving communities. All of our efforts fall under the five following areas of support.



## STARFISH FUND

The Starfish Fund provides resources to assist schools in addressing student needs including, but not limited to: clothing, school supplies, health, and transportation.

**\$76,403.91**  
DOLLARS DISBURSED



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE FUND

The Make a Difference Fund offers financial subsidies to students experiencing poverty so that they may participate with their peers in field trips, school extracurricular activities, and school events.

**\$19,712.13**  
DOLLARS DISBURSED



## THINK OUTSIDE THE BELL FUND

The Think Outside the Bell Fund provides financial support to students in need who would significantly benefit from participating in specialized programs such as Preschool Success and After School Recreation and Arts Programs.

**\$2,500.68**  
DOLLARS DISBURSED



## FUTURE FUND

The Future Fund provides students with financial support to assist post secondary pathways.

**\$250.00**  
DOLLARS DISBURSED



## THE S.N.A.C.K. FUND

The Student Nutrition Fund provides food access to classrooms and kids.

**\$36,747.49**  
DOLLARS DISBURSED

**TOTAL IMPACT DOLLARS DISBURSED**

**\$137,929.36**

# WE WANT TO CEREAL(OUSLY) THANK YOU!

It started with a call for help. “**We need food.**” The Principal of one of our highest need schools– based on social-economic disparity– let us know that their breakfast program funding would not last until June. Students at that school rely heavily on the food support they receive– some eating only what is provided to them at school for the day. It was a serious situation, and as a result, the IDLF ‘Cereal(ously)’ campaign was born. Launched in May, DDSB staff and students quickly jumped to action to ensure that students had ‘Full Bellies to Fuel Brains,’ because it’s hard to be successful in school when you are hungry.

Over 12 DDSB schools hosted food drives, and staff across the DDSB contributed to the campaign that raised almost \$7000.00 worth of breakfast and snack foods and over \$1400.00 in cash donations.

One Ajax school learned that giving to others in need can also be fun. They participated in a ‘Cereal Box Domino Challenge’ collecting over 300 boxes– enough to go around the entire school’s main floor. Students gathered around to watch the ‘Dominoes’ fall as they celebrated their philanthropic efforts. One local Fire Department also got in on the action by collecting food at their hall and donating to our campaign.

We know that food insecurity is at an all-time high, and no longer restricted to our highest priority school communities. In the end, this campaign was not only able to give food support to the original school that reached out, but almost **SIXTY** additional schools across the region.

**Together, we Cereal(ously) Rock!**



# IMPACT STORIES

## Glen Street Public School

The Oshawa Cobs Bread donations had a significant impact on our Glen Street school community the last few months of the 2022-2023 school year.

With the rising cost of food, many of our families were able to use these donations to create more wholesome lunches for their children. They could afford deli meat, cheese or jam and send their children with sandwiches. Our families used the bread, which are baked fresh daily with no added or preservatives, to supplement dinners by adding it as a side with soups or making grilled cheese.

Families that utilized our Cobs Bread program were families with insecure housing situations, families new to Canada and families that were newly created by adults in the community welcomed Glen students into their home. Whatever the situation was, our team in the office worked diligently to ensure the Cobs Bread Donations made it to those who needed it most. Our families were so thankful for the opportunity to subsidize their already tight grocery budgets with the help of Cobs Bread Oshawa.

**“We hope that the opportunity to work with Cobs Bread will continue for the 2023-2024 school year as its impact is felt greatly”**

**Ashleigh Hamilton,  
Vice-Principal, Glen Street Public School**



# COBS BREAD



# IMPACT STORIES



## Fieldgate Developments

Durham region is growing, meaning that each year, more children become students and join the community with their families.

Fieldgate Developments is one of the largest developers in the GTA with over 65 years of experience in building homes that turn into communities. Since 1957, Fieldgate Developments has been building acclaimed family homes and communities across Ontario. As a longstanding member of the Ontario community, They understand what it means to make a home that families can grow, create memories, eat together and learn in.

It is these values that families trust when it comes to choosing their home as a home. Fieldgate Development understands the importance of community and is a major component of the Durham ecosystem.

For Giving Tuesday 2022, Fieldgate Developments partnered with IDLF to ensure every gift received that day had **DOUBLE** the impact. Community is stronger together and thanks to Fieldgate Developments, we were able to support double the amount of children and youth in our schools. As a team, we were able to fill more bellies, fill more backpacks and allow students the opportunity to realize their full potential.



**Full belly.  
Full backpack.  
Full potential.**



# IMPACT STORIES

## Operation Warm

It's a cold Wednesday morning in January and there is so much happening at school, students can't wait to get there. For some, this could be a challenge – they won't leave their home that day because they don't have a coat that zippers, they share one with their sibling or perhaps they don't even have a winter jacket. A reality for 17% of our children and youth!

Walking to school on a very cold day, playing outside with friends at recess and sledding down the hill after school is now possible for 1008 DDSB students thanks to an incredibly generous donation from Operation Warm. Having the ability to play and be outdoors is crucial to children's development. Having the resources necessary to get to school is critical for their social and academic development.

Operation Warm has fulfilled its Mission by: Providing warmth, confidence, and hope through basic need programs that connect underserved kids to community resources needed to thrive.

**"The gift of a coat is more than a piece of clothing; it provides a sense of security, comfort, and self esteem for kids and parents needing an act of kindness and concern. It tells them they matter and people care."**— Beneficiary

**"I'm the luckiest kid ever, I love my new coat and my Mom will too"**  
— DDSB student.

**OPERATION**  
**warm**  
more than a coat®





# IMPACT STORIES



## Giant Tiger

Giant Tiger is committed to the communities they are in. No one knows that more than Whitby store owner, Joel. He was raised in Durham and attended DDSB schools as a kid. So when he became owner in 2021, giving back to the community that gave him so much was a part of his mission. An avid Ignite Durham Learning Foundation (IDLF) supporter, Giant Tiger Whitby has generously donated over \$1600.00 of in-kind donations to support students in 2022/2023. When asked why he continues to support, Joel said "The IDLF offers the opportunity to help kids who need it the most who can not necessarily affect change in their lives themselves. Helping provide the resources essential to their well-being and allowing them to focus their energy on education and simply, being kids - can allow them to get to a place where they can affect change in their lives themselves. What could be a better cause?"

In 2022, Joel connected Oshawa store owner, Kish, to IDLF and challenged him to join efforts in supporting Durham students. Accepting gladly, Kish and his Oshawa team quickly established the 'Angel Tree' giving campaign to enlist customer's help to raise money for food hampers for students and families in need. In just a couple weeks, \$800.00 was raised, and supported dozens of families with much needed food and household goods. Kish and Joel's year-round in-kind donations send thousands of dollars of Giant Tiger merchandise to our Starfish Store at the 'Make a Difference Depot' where the impact on students is immediate and tangible, with items such as shoes, clothing and personal care items distributed to students in need.

Joel and Kish are invaluable IDLF partners, who together, are making communities brighter across the region.

**"Last year we placed a request to provide a student (HM) with some clothing. HM was one of the students chosen to participate in the Special Olympics in Kingston, ON. It was HM's first trip away from home. His family has been experiencing financial difficulties, and his parents were not able to provide HM with all the necessities for this 3-day trip. Thanks to your kind donation, HM went to his trip fully equipped with everything he needed. Your donation played a much bigger role than intended- not only it provided HM with a high level of comfort, but it also raised his self-esteem. We are very grateful for your consideration and thoughtfulness."**

— Larisa Kavitzky, Special Education Teacher, Durham District School Board

\*necessities for the trip were all purchased from Giant Tiger Angel Tree funding.

# IMPACT STORIES

## Staff Pickleball Tournament

In a spirited display of community, connection, and camaraderie, the Durham District School Board (DDSB) recently hosted a staff pickleball tournament that not only showcased the talents of its dedicated educators and staff members but also raised significant funds for the Ignite Durham Learning Foundation (IDLF). The event brought together individuals from various schools, locations, and departments; all united by a shared passion for the game of pickleball, a belief in the power of education, as well as helping those in need.

Pickleball has been gaining popularity across North America. Its accessibility and ease of learning make it a perfect choice for participants of all ages and skill levels. The DDSB staff pickleball tournament embraced this inclusivity, welcoming players with a wide range of experience, from beginners to seasoned enthusiasts.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the tournament was its ability to foster a sense of community within the school district. Educators and staff members coming together for a day of friendly competition and shared camaraderie. This sense of unity and togetherness transcended the boundaries of individual schools and departments, reinforcing the idea that the DDSB is a diverse community working towards a common goal: providing quality education to its students and fostering their well-being.



## Pickleball continued

Beyond the thrill of competition, the tournament had a higher purpose. The event was organized to raise support for the Ignite Durham Learning Foundation. The funds raised from the tournament have undoubtedly contributed to IDLF's ongoing efforts to ignite learning opportunities for students across the district.

While the tournament had its share of competitive moments, the prevailing spirit was one of sportsmanship and collaboration. Participants cheered each other on, celebrated each other's victories, and offered a helping hand to those who were still mastering the nuances of the game. It was a reminder that educators and staff members in the DDSB are not only dedicated to the success of their students but also to the success of their colleagues and the broader educational community. The DDSB staff pickleball tournament was a resounding success, more than just a sporting event, it was a testament to the dedication and commitment of those who work tirelessly to provide quality education in Durham Region. As the tournament's participants and supporters continue to champion education, they remind us all that the spirit of collaboration and the pursuit of knowledge can truly ignite positive change in our communities.

**Michael Murray**  
**John Dryden Public School**

**DRYDEN**



# HELP US MAKE TOMORROW BRIGHTER

A gift to the Ignite Durham Learning Foundation supports students in a variety of ways. A child or youth in need may receive a healthy snack for school, a winter coat, a pair of shoes, or waterproof gloves. In addition, a gift to IDLF may come in the form of financial assistance to cover application fees for college, or bus fare to support a student's transportation needs.

Every gift makes a difference and provides children and youth the opportunity to reach their full potential.



## CONTACT US

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**Telephone:** 905-666-6000


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